

# Rainbow Warrior 2.3 Practice Sources Activity

## Introduction

The bombing of the *Rainbow Warrior* took place on 10 July 1985, in Auckland's Waitemata Harbour. The *Rainbow Warrior* was the environmental organisation *Greenpeace*'s flagship protest vessel and was on its way to the Pacific atoll of Mururoa to protest at French nuclear testing there. The vessel was sunk by two bombs, causing the death of photographer Fernando Pereira. After an extensive police investigation, the bombs were found to have been attached to the hull of the boat by secret agents working for the French government, two of whom were captured and imprisoned. A dispute between the New Zealand and France governments followed, which was eventually settled by United Nations mediation.



## Source A: *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*

The *Rainbow Warrior* had been involved in protests over French nuclear testing in the Pacific. French Secret Service (DGSE) agents were sent to prevent it leaving for another protest campaign at Mururoa Atoll.

Two DGSE officers, Dominique Prieur and Alain Mafart, were arrested on 24 July. Both were charged with murder, pleaded guilty to manslaughter and were sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. The case was a source of considerable embarrassment to the French government. While the attack was on an international organisation rather than New Zealand itself, most New Zealanders did not make such a distinction. The fact that it was committed on New Zealand territory by a supposed friend produced a sense of outrage and a serious deterioration in relations between New Zealand and France.

France used its influence to threaten New Zealand's access to the important European Economic Community market, and New Zealand exports to France were boycotted. New Zealanders reacted in a similar manner to French imports. Eventually, both countries agreed to allow the United Nations to mediate a settlement.

Almost a year after the bombing, on 8 July 1986, United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar announced, in a binding decision, that New Zealand would receive an apology and compensation of \$13 million from France, which was also ordered not to interfere with New Zealand's trade negotiations. Dominique Prieur and Alain Mafart were to serve their sentences in full on Hao Atoll in French Polynesia.

In what was seen as the final insult, both prisoners were released early. Alain Mafart returned to France because of 'illness' in 1987, while Dominique Prieur was repatriated in May 1988 because she was pregnant. Both were decorated [awarded medals] and promoted upon their return home.

This incident did much to promote what has been described as New Zealand's 'silent war of independence' and was central to an upsurge in New Zealand nationalism. There was a sense of having to 'go it alone' because traditional allies such as the United States and Britain sat on their hands while France worked to block New Zealand exports. The failure of Britain and the United States to condemn this act of terrorism hardened support for a more independent foreign policy line.

Source: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/nuclear-free-new-zealand/rainbow-warrior>

## Source B

*Transcript of Radio Coverage of the sinking from 1985*

*Man:* Somebody blew up our boat. They ripped her guts out and killed one of our crew. I feel like someone had ripped some of my guts out in the process. I and the rest of Greenpeace will not rest until she or her successor is sailing again.

*Second man:* Well I just lost a good friend, and now I have to go to the morgue to identify him, so I guess that says it.

*Female announcer:* Explosions rang out from the 40-metre ship at around midnight and the crew scrambled to get off the vessel to safety as she began going under, but one crew member was caught below decks, and police recovered his body this morning. Stunned Greenpeace people say the vessel was priceless, but right now they are still mourning for their dead colleague who went down with the vessel.

*Man:* All we know is that between the first and second explosions he went back on board, presumably to retrieve his camera gear, and he never made it out.

*Male announcer :* *Rainbow Warrior* didn't go to a warrior's death; she sank in her sleep just after midnight, tied up at an Auckland wharf. It's a tragic end to what was probably the world's number one peace vessel, small as she was. In recent months, *Rainbow Warrior* has plied from Pacific island to Pacific island, moving people from the ravages of the troubled years we live in. What blew her up and killed a man of peace?

*Man:* I'd say half of the world leaders of Greenpeace are in New Zealand at the moment.

*Interviewer:* So the one big question mark in your mind at the moment is?

*Man:* Is, what happened on the boat last night? Is it an accident, or was it not an accident?

Source: <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/sound/sinking-of-the-rainbow-warrior-sound>

## Source C



Cartoon by Plantu in *Le Monde* [French magazine] in response to the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack of January 2015.

Roughly translated a quote by former French President Francois Mitterrand giving a history lesson: "At that time, only presidents had the right to carry out terrorism!"

The student is reading a book called *History of France 1985*.

## **Source D - Comment on the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack.**

The atrocious murders at the Charlie Hebdo newspaper offices in Paris and then the supermarket, are ironically reminiscent of the equally sad or even more incredible bombing of the Greenpeace ship Rainbow Warrior in Auckland Harbour in 1985 by New Zealand's supposed ally France which initially vehemently denied responsibility.

Six secret service agents of the French GSDE, some using false Swiss passports, infiltrated NZ as tourists, even visiting and spying on the ship posing as supporters – and planted 2 bombs on the peace boat which was, like the attackers in France, protesting – in that case French nuclear bombs. Whilst most of the 11 Rainbow Warrior's crew on board at the time survived, one was murdered in an action labelled by the NZ government as an act of terrorism by France.

Some of the French terrorists escaped on their yacht Ouvea to a waiting French submarine Rubis which then scuttled the Ouvea. Two French government murderers were captured in NZ and tried – pleading guilty. Former French Prime Minister Fabius admitted the plot and cover-up as “the terrible truth” apologising + paying NZ\$13 million and later over \$8 million to Greenpeace. Following ‘Le Monde’ newspaper alleging President Mitterrand had approved the mission, the French Minister of Defence Hernu was forced to resign – the only government ‘Fall Guy.’ French Admiral Pierre Lacoste also admitted involvement.

Following French threats of an economic blackmail embargo against little NZ's agricultural exports – in a sense their ‘oil’ – to the European Economic Community if the pair were not released – potentially crippling the NZ economy – the French terrorists were transferred to a French military base on Hao Atoll to serve their sentences yet despite intergovernmental agreement they were released after serving only a fraction of their incarceration term – it was a disgraceful affair perpetrated on a peaceful cause and nation by an arrogant powerful government.

Whilst that was an arrogant, isolated though arrogant and ill conceived malicious confrontation, France and all other affected threatened countries are now being ‘treated’ by their ‘imports’ to what some other nations – which never succumbed to blackmail – have endured for years.

Source: <http://pacific.scoop.co.nz/2015/01/pmc-condemns-cowardly-paris-raid-slams-impunity-in-asia-pacific-region/>

## **Source E - David Lange speech at the 1985 Oxford Union debate. NZ Prime Minister Lange argued here affirming the topic: ‘Nuclear Weapons are Morally Indefensible’.**

The fact is that Europe and the United States are ringed about with nuclear weapons, and your people have never been more at risk. There is simply only one thing more terrifying than nuclear weapons pointed in your direction and that is nuclear weapons pointed in your enemy's direction: the outcome of their use would be the same in either case, and that is the annihilation of you and all of us. That is a defence which is no defence; it is a defence which disturbs far more than it reassures. The intention of those who for honourable motives use nuclear weapons to deter is to enhance security. Notwithstanding that intention, they succeed only in enhancing insecurity. Because the machine has perverted the motive. The President of the United States has acknowledged that, notwithstanding that my honourable friend opposite does not, and the weapon has installed mass destruction as the objective of the best-intentioned.

The weapon simply has its own relentless logic, and it is inhuman. It is the logic of escalation, the logic of the arms race. Nuclear weapons make us insecure, and to compensate for our insecurity we build and deploy more nuclear weapons. We know that we are seized by irrationality – and every now and then some new generation technology comes in, the argument for which is that it will cause us to draw back from the nuclear precipice. And we are seeing right now another initiative, under a new title: the title of course in dispute as much as its efficiency will be. And that, Mr President, is the story of the whole saga of the nuclear escalation.

Source: <http://publicaddress.net/great-new-zealand-argument/nuclear-weapons-are-morally-indefensible/?page=0>

## Source F

*Lyrics from 'French Letter' by New Zealand band Herbs. Released 1982, this song spent 11 weeks in the NZ Top 20.*

Can you see yourself, under a coconut tree  
Wanting for nothing, or maybe a cooler breeze  
Where all things romantic, in the south pacific  
And the only peace is the spit on a feast.

Do you know what makes the ocean glow  
Do you know what makes the ocean glow  
When unwelcome guests, are making nuclear tests.

Oh yes, no nukes hah ahhhhhhh  
Nuclear mis energy, nuclear, nuclear, free.

Is there nothing at all who can appease your greed,  
Could you please leave the air we breath  
Why is it something we've done  
You all seem to forget  
About nuclear fallout and the long term effects

Is there anything gained when you hide the plane  
Anything gained when you hide the plane  
Let me be more specific, get out of the pacific  
Ki te la pacific, get out of the pacific

## QUESTIONS

Q1:

Cause and Effect. Use evidence from Sources A and B to explain what the Long and Short-Term effects of the Rainbow Warrior bombing were. You may also refer to other sources.

Q2:

Perspective. Refer to Source C and D. What perspective on the Rainbow Warrior bombings is shared by both the cartoonist in Source C and the commentator in Source D? Give evidence from both sources to support your answer.

Q3:

Intent and Motivation. Refer to Source E. Explain the intent and motivation of David Lange's speech. Use evidence from the source to support your answer.

Q4.

Usefulness and reliability. Examine the usefulness and reliability of Source F as a representation of New Zealanders' attitudes towards French nuclear testing in the Pacific.